

2026-2027 Environmental Education Initiative (EEI) LyondellBasell Greening STEM Grants Request for Applications (RFA)





2026-2027 Environmental Education Initiative (EEI) LyondellBasell (LYB) Greening STEM Grants

Supported by LyondellBasell

Issued by the Environmental Education Initiative by Discovery Education with LyondellBasell and the National Environmental Education Foundation

Proposal Due Date: September 30, 2026, at 11:59 pm Pacific

Contact: Megan Willig, Program Director of Environmental Education, NEEF, mwillig@neefusa.org, Subject: EEI LYB Greening STEM Grant Question

During the 2026-2027 school year, the Environmental Education Initiative by Discovery Education with the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) and LyondellBasell (LYB) to select two cohorts of five Greening STEM projects from the LyondellBasell communities of Houston, TX; Corpus Christi-Victoria-Matagorda, TX; Lake Charles, LA; Edison, NJ; Morris, IL; Clinton, IA; and Cincinnati, OH. Each project will receive a \$5,000 grant. The Environmental Education Initiative by Discovery Education with NEEF and other partners is a first-of-its-kind program designed to engage students in environmental science, empower them to make informed decisions for healthy environments, and promote civic engagement.

The \$5,000 awards will support holistic STEM programs that infuse environmental science and resources into school curricula focused on student-directed investigations of relevant topics of research, local environmental issues, or problems affecting local public lands. The funding will allow formal and nonformal educators to design and deliver STEM programming that engages youth in place-based learning and environmental monitoring.

Through these EEI LYB Greening STEM grants, Discovery EEI, LYB, and NEEF seek to advance mutual STEM education goals by providing program participants with access to authentic STEM learning experiences that use the environment as a context for engagement.

Programming funded by these grants will utilize STEM-focused content, instructional strategies, training approaches, and collaboration and dissemination technologies to assist school educators and staff in implementing and enhancing learning in and outside of the classroom. For examples of successful past projects check out NEEF's collection of project videos and educational resources at www.neefusa.org/what-we-do/k-12-education/greening-stem-hub.

Eligibility

This grant competition is open to all public schools serving Grades 6-12 and their community partners in the targeted communities of Houston, TX; Lake Charles, LA; Edison, NJ; Morris, IL; Clinton, IA; and Cincinnati, OH. Applications must be submitted online through NEEF's grant management software.



Funding

We anticipate that there will be \$25,000 available to issue grants of \$5,000 each for fall in the 2026-2027 academic school year. Grantees must complete their Greening STEM projects by spring 2027.

Grant Program Priorities

NEEF and LYB aim to increase grantee teams' understanding of how to use STEM learning activities to address environmental challenges, engender stewardship, and forge lasting collaborations by:

- bringing Greening STEM programming that includes citizen science or environmental monitoring activities to middle school students;
- building the capacity of formal and informal educators to offer high-quality STEM programming that aligns with state education standards;
- helping schools build a culture that values using the environment as a context for improving student learning and achievement;
- facilitating a collaborative development and planning process for engaging youth in environmental monitoring activities—identifying a topic relevant to the community and collecting environmental data (e.g., air, soil, water quality) while practicing Science and Engineering Practices (SEPs), acquiring Disciplinary Core Ideas (DCIs), and applying Crosscutting Concepts (CCC)
- stimulating educational partnerships between schools and community-based organizations that facilitate meaningful place-based learning experiences for students;
- engendering environmental stewardship through a learner-centered approach that encourages authentic problem-solving, collaboration, and leadership in planning and leading a learning expedition on public lands; and
- increasing student interest in STEM content and careers.

Timeline

Application and Grant Process

- Late August 2026 – Online applications open
- **September 30, 2026 – Grant applications are due**
- October 2026 – Application review and grantee selection completed
- Fall 2026 – Award announcement and distribution of funding
- Grant performance period will extend through the spring semester.
- Spring 2027 – grantee final reports are due.

Application Requirements

The following sections outline what will be expected of applicants. All applications must be submitted using NEEF's [online grants portal](#). If you have applied for a NEEF grant previously, please use your existing account. If in doubt, existing accounts can be **searched for** using a tax ID number (EIN). First time applicants will need to create an account.



Greening STEM Project Design Principles:

The Greening STEM Model is an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to teaching STEM subjects that uses the natural environment and real-world challenges to engage learners and deliver high-quality STEM education. The students' experiences and interests are at the center of learning as they explore STEM content and develop a 21st century skills set. Throughout the experience, students can be tasked with different levels of responsibility from working as a team on a project to planning and leading a learning expedition. By having autonomy to design and explore a question of interest related to local landscapes, students are offered opportunities for authentic problem-solving while making gains in environmental knowledge and fostering a stewardship ethic.

All EEI LYB Greening STEM projects should include elements of the Greening STEM Design Principles. These are place-based learning, three-dimensional learning, project-based learning, and community-based learning.

- Place-based learning elements: Students are encouraged to explore a topic of study, issue, or problem through direct first-hand experience; collaboration between students interested in the same topic of study, issue, or problem is encouraged; facilitators (DE affiliated educator, community partners, nonformal educators) serve as connectors to existing ways to involve learners with the topics of interest.
- Three-dimensional learning elements: Exploration of an anchoring phenomenon encourages students to question assumptions and current understanding; STEM practices are used to motivate problem-solving; exploration of the anchoring phenomenon leads to disciplinary core ideas; cross-cutting concepts are used to connect the anchoring phenomenon to real world events.
- Project-based learning elements: The learners are intellectually challenged by their project work; the nature of their project engages learners over the course of days, weeks, or even months; real-world authenticity is achieved by the selection of tools, techniques, and technology used to explore the topic of study; the students have an opportunity to share their work with audiences beyond their classroom.
- Community-based learning elements: The topic of inquiry is explored within a local cultural context, encouraging learners to understand the unique makeup of their communities and the factors that shape them. They consider which knowledge systems and traditions are recognized in discussions of the issue and which are overlooked, as well as how this influences current understanding. Students also examine how different solutions impact their communities, ensuring they are practical, respectful of local perspectives, and responsive to the needs of those affected.

Project Expectations

Description of the citizen science or environmental monitoring project, including what STEM skills students will learn as an outcome of participating in the project. Please include:



- Description of a series of STEM learning activities that will take place during the project.
- Description of one or more of the pre-field activities that will prepare students for one or more field experiences to be followed by two or more post-field activities.
 - At least one pre-field activity must include a visit (virtual or in-person) to the participating school[s] from a community partner representative.
 - Field-based activities must include one or more visits to the field site to participate in data collection as part of a citizen science or environmental monitoring project.
 - One of the two or more post-field activities must involve data analysis. Another activity needs to include some type of presentation of the project findings.

Grant Expectations

Consultations

Grantees are encouraged to consult with NEEF's K-12 Education team regarding project design and implementation. Challenges to implementation should also be addressed with the K-12 team, including any inability to spend down the grant award.

Evaluation

All grantees are required to participate in the evaluation process. This may require interviews, observations, and other forms of data collection and analysis with participating faculty, staff, and students.

Releases

Grantees will be required to submit signed release forms for all students, faculty, and staff participating in programs funded through this initiative. These forms will be provided to the grantees upon notification of the award and will be due within 30 days of launching the first program activity. Media submissions are requested as part of the Final Report but can be shared at any time.

Funding Can Be Requested to Support:

- Staff/personnel costs for partner project team members.
- Directly related travel costs for partner project team members
- Transportation costs for students and youth participants
- Development and printing of training and educational materials (e.g. cost to print field manuals, protocol documents, datasheets, etc.)
- Project-specific supplies and materials (e.g. measurement equipment, tablets, software, etc.)
- Data quality measures/evaluations.
- Costs for professional development for partner staff and educators to learn more about Greening STEM Project Design Principles (e.g. trainings on place-based learning, three-



dimensional learning, project-based learning, and/or community-based learning) and other skill sets germane to execution of the project

- On-site costs (e.g. transportation, portable restrooms)
- Postage/shipping (e.g. costs to mail students educational materials and/or supplies)
- Analysis of samples (e.g. air, soil, or water quality samples sent to a lab)
- Data analysis
- Training in program planning, citizen science or environmental monitoring, and Greening STEM Design Principles (no more than 10% of project budget should support training).
- Other costs – include and we will evaluate

Application Assistance

All applications must be submitted through our [online system](#). If you have any questions related to the funding opportunity, please consult our Grant FAQ page or email Megan Willig at MWillig@NEEFUsa.org. For all other technical questions or problems, please contact us at grants@neefusa.org. Please type "EEI LYB Greening STEM Grant" in the subject line of your email.